(b) whether it is also a fact that staggering 66 per cent jump in expenditure is the price of this delay; and

(c) if so, whether Government have made any investigations to find out the reasons for the delay and the action proposed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI G.K. VASAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As on 1st April, 2006, out of 742 projects, 76 projects with original cost of Rs. 39811.57 crore and anticipated cost of Rs. 71,008.87 crore, had both time and cost overrun. For these projects, time overrun varied from 1 month to 252 months, and cost overrun was 78.36% of the original cost.

(c) The reasons for delay include financial constraints, delay in land acquisition and rehabilitation, delay in award of contracts, delay in equipment supply, slow progress of construction by the contractors, delay in environment and other clearances, law and order, geological surprises in the case of mining and hydro-electric power projects, etc. The actions taken to ensure timely completion of these projects are as follows:

(i) adoption of two-stage clearance system and stricter appraisal of projects before investment approval;

(il) taking up of projects for implementation only after funds have been fully tied up;

(iii) in-depth review of projects on monthly and quarterly basis by the Government;

(iv) follow up with the State Governments in respect of problems relating to land acquisition, rehabilitation related issues, forest clearances, infrastructure facilities, law and order at project sites, etc.

(v) inter-ministerial coordination for resolving unresolved problems; and

(vi) appointment of nodal officers for each project with continuity of tenure.

Modernising the statistical system

1916. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are modernising the statistical system in the country to suit the present conditions;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the status of computerization of statistical system in each State; and

(d) the assistance given by Government to each State in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI G.K. VASAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India Statistical Strengthening Project (ISSP) was formulated with the assistance from the World Bank for strengthening of Indian Statistical System with primary focus on strengthening of State Statistical System. The ISSP has a 2-Tier approach for its implementation. Tier-I consists of four components, namely: (i) Creation and Maintenance of Business Register, (ii) Improvement of Service Sector Statistics, (iii) Strengthening of State Statistical Bureaus, and (iv) Assessment of Survey Capabilities of Private Sector. The Tier-I is expected to be completed by December, 2007.

(c) Most of the States have not fully computerized the statistical system. Tier-I I of the project is proposed to be on strengthening of State Statistical Bureaus, which includes infrastructure development of the State Statistical Bureau including computer network.

(d) No assistance has been given to any State for computerization of State Statistical System.

Kochi Metro Rail Project

1917. SHRI THENNALAG. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any request to start Kochi Metro Rail Project; and

(b) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI AJAY MAKEN): (a) and (b) The Government of Kerala propose to implement an elevated light metro system in Kochi over